Vegetation notes: Prior to European settlement the only area of extensive indigenous forest was on the foothills of the Ruahine range and the Ruahine range itself. The Ruataniwha plains were indigenous grassland and the rest of the catchment was covered in scrub and fern.

European settlement established pastoral farming. This resulted in large areas of indigenous grassland being cleared and burnt and converted into exotic pasture. Most attempts to establish pasture were ruined by accidental burnoffs, rabbit infestation and a reversion to scrub. Later extensive grazing by deer sheep and cattle lead to rapid soil erosion.

At present the greater portion of the Tukituki catchment is extremely fertile. High producing soil